

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (~~10, 110, 210, 310, 410, 510, 610~~) suitable for insertion in a fractured elongate bone (~~12~~), comprising a stem (~~14, 114, 214, 314, 414, 514, 614~~) extending between a proximal end (~~16, 116, 216, 416, 516, 616~~) and a distal end (~~18, 118, 218, 418, 518, 618~~), the nail comprising a plurality of elements (~~20, 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620~~) realised with at least a shape-memory material, a plurality of seats (~~19, 119, 219, 319, 419, 519, 619~~) formed in the stem (~~14, 114, 214, 314, 414, 514, 614~~) for housing said elements (~~20, 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620~~) and in that said elements (~~20, 120, 220, 320, 420, 520, 620~~) are suitable to take a first shape wherein they are retractably housed in the respective seats (~~19, 219, 219, 319, 419, 519, 619~~) and a second shape wherein they project from the respective seats (~~19, 219, 219, 319, 419, 519, 619~~), ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the stem (~~14~~) comprises at least two half-cylinders united along the length.

2. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (~~10~~) according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the seats of the stem (~~14~~) are made of a plurality of transversal slots, or elongate holes (~~19~~), which extends passing from one side of the stem (~~14~~) to the other.

3. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (~~10~~) according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it comprises inserts (~~23~~), structurally independent from the stem (~~14~~), and comprising at least one of said shape-memory elements (~~20~~), each of said inserts (~~23~~) being suitable for insertion in a corresponding seat (~~19~~).

4. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each insert (23) is inserted by pressure in the respective seat (19).

5. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each of said inserts (23) comprises two shape-memory elements (20), which are connected by means of a central connection element (22, 26).

6. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each insert (23) has substantially fork-like shape.

7. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 2 and 6, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each fork-like insert (23) is suitable to be housed in a corresponding transversal slot (19), so that the two elements (20) are arranged on side opposite to the stem (14).

8. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the inserts (23) are flanked in succession along the length of the stem (14).

9. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the inserts (23) are distributed on the side surface of the stem (14) in correspondence with the proximal end (16) and the distal end (18).

10. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the inserts (23) are offset with respect to each other of 90° sexagesimal.

11. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ the two elements (20) of each insert (23) comprise two opposite tabs (20), having a flexural memory.

12. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 3, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the inserts (23) is of the multilaminar type, i.e. it is realised by means of a plurality of overlapped foils of shape-memory material.

13. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ the two elements (20) of the insert (23) are connected by means of a cylindrical sleeve (26).

14. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 13, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein on said cylindrical sleeve (26) two opposite grooves (28) are provided, being offset substantially of a right angle with respect to said two elements (20) and suitable to house at least partially the elements of a flanked cylindrical sleeve (26).

15. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 11, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the tabs (20) on the surface facing outwards the stem (14) have a substantially sawtooth-like profile (32).

16. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) suitable for insertion in a fractured elongate bone (12), comprising a stem (14) extending between a proximal end (16) and a distal end (18), a plurality of elements (20) realised with at least a shape-memory material, and a plurality of seats (19) formed in the stem (14) for housing said elements (20), wherein said elements (20) are suitable to take a first shape wherein they are retractably housed in the respective seats (19) and a second shape wherein they project from the respective seats (19), wherein the nail includes inserts

(23), structurally independent from the stem (14) and comprising at least one of said shape-memory elements (20), each of said inserts (23) being suitable for insertion in a corresponding seat (19), ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each insert includes a plurality of overlapped foils made by shape-memory material.

17. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 16, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each insert (23) has substantially fork-like shaped.

18. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 17, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein for ensuring a stable assembly of the metallic foils, the insert (23) is provided with a pair of blocking pins (33) inserted transversally to the metallic foils.

19. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) suitable for insertion in a fractured elongate bone (12), comprising a stem (14) extending between a proximal end (16) and a distal end (18), a plurality of elements (20) realised with at least a shape-memory material, and a plurality of seats (19) formed in the stem (14) for housing said elements (20), wherein said elements (20) are suitable to take a first shape wherein they are retractably housed in the respective seats (19) and a second shape wherein they project from the respective seats (19), ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it comprises a tubular jacket (40) having a side wall (41) which sheathes the stem (14) and has the function of retaining the shape-memory elements (20) in the first shape, i.e. in the close retractable position in the seats (19), when the nail (10) is inserted in the bone.

20. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 19, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the jacket (40) comprises a plurality of transversal elongate holes (42), made on the tubular wall (41).

21. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the jacket (40) and the stem (14) can be shifted with respect to each other from a first operative position during which the side wall (41) of the jacket (40) retains the shape-memory elements (20) in the first retractable shape in the seats (19), and a second operative position wherein the transversal holes (42) of the jacket (40) are aligned in the seats (19) of the stem (14), so as to allow the arrangement of the elements (20) projecting from the respective seats (19).

22. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the shift relative to the jacket (40) with respect to the stem (14) occurs along the axis of the nail (10).

23. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 21, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it comprises a control screw (45), suitable to be rigidly connected to a head portion (14a) of the stem (14) for controlling, by means of rotation around its own axis, the axial shift of the stem (14) with respect to the jacket (40).

24. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (10) according to claim 23, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it comprises an internally hollow tube (50) suitable to be rigidly connected to a head portion of the jacket (40) and wherein the control screw (45) is backlash-like housed.

25. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (110) according to claim 1, ~~16, 19,~~ ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each element (120) is housed in a corresponding groove (122) having the function of seat (119) circumferentially developing along the side surface of the stem (14).

26. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (210) according to claim 1, ~~16, 19,~~ ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each element (120, 220) is housed in a corresponding groove (122,

~~222~~) having the function of seat ~~(219)~~ axially developing along the side surface of the stem ~~(114, 214)~~.

27. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail ~~(110, 210)~~ according to claim 25 ~~and 26~~, characterised in that wherein each element ~~(120, 220)~~ is fixed to a first end of the stem ~~(114, 214)~~ and it has a second free end ~~(121, 21)~~ suitable to be arranged, in correspondence with said second shape, outside the stem ~~(14)~~.

28. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail ~~(110, 210)~~ according to claim 25 ~~or 26~~, characterised in that wherein said groove ~~(22, 122)~~ has a U-shaped profile.

29. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail ~~(410)~~ according to claim 1, ~~16, 19~~, characterised in that each of said seats ~~(419)~~ is made of a narrow section ~~(426, 427)~~ made at the two ends of the stem ~~(414)~~, and in that said narrow section ~~(426, 427)~~ is suitable to retractably house a cylindrical sleeve ~~(422, 423)~~ of shape- memory material.

30. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail ~~(410)~~ according to claim 29, characterised in that wherein said cylindrical sleeve ~~(422, 423)~~ comprises a plurality of longitudinal slots ~~(424, 425)~~, the slots ~~(424, 425)~~ defining a plurality of fillets ~~(424a, 425a)~~, said fillets ~~(424a, 425a)~~ taking a cask stave configuration projecting from the narrow section ~~(426, 427)~~ for the nail fixation to the bone.

31. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail ~~(410)~~ according to claim 30, characterised in that wherein said slots ~~(424, 425)~~ are angularly equally spaced.

32. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (410) according to claim 30, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said narrow section (426) has a thread at the stem free, a retaining ring (428) of the cylindrical sleeve (422) being screwed on said thread.

33. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (410) according to claim 30, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said narrow section (427) has a thread at the stem free, a retaining plug of the cylindrical sleeve (423) being screwed on said thread.

34. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (510, 610) according to claim 1, ~~16, 19,~~ ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said stem (514) is a cylindrical tube and in that said elements (520a) realised with a shape-memory material are two inserts (544), one of them placed at the proximal end (516) and the other at the distal end of the nail (510), said inserts being housed in correspondence with respective portions with lowered section of ~~teh~~ the stem (514) forming said housing seats (519).

35. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (510) according to claim 34, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each insert (544) is shaped as a cylindrical sleeve which comprises a plurality of longitudinal cuts (524), said cuts (524) cutting the thickness of the cylindrical sleeve of the insert (544) and defining a plurality of tongues (546) suitable to project with ~~resepet~~ respect to the respective seat (519).

36. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (610) according to claim 35, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said narrow section (626) with function of seat has an outer prismatic shape corresponding to an inner conjugated prismatic shape of the central hole of the cylindrical sleeve (622).

37. (Currently amended) Intramedullary nail (610) according to claim 36,
~~characterised in that~~ wherein said outer prismatic shape of said narrow section (626) and of said
central hole of the cylindrical sleeve (622) is a regular octagonal prism.